



YOUR VOTE COUNTS!



TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN

The Pipeline

May, 2017 Volume 21, No. 1

Charlestown Incorporated 1738

All-Day Financial Referendum

June 5, 2017

Charlestown Town Hall

Polls Open 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM

Ballot Question: 1. "Shall the Town appropriate the FY 2017—2018 budget of \$13,603,364 for municipal services, as adopted by the Charlestown Town Council on May 8, 2017?"

To view the **COMPLETE**
2017—2018 Proposed Budget:
<http://www.charlestownri.org>
On right hand side of
home page, look under
"News and Information"
and select
"Town Budget 2017—2018"

March 31, 2017

Proposed FY 2016 - 2017 Budget

Dear Councilors:

Attached for your information and review is the Charlestown Budget Commission's recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2018, and its comparison with Fiscal Year 2017.

This budget recommendation would not be possible without the support and assistance provided to the Commission by many people. We would like to recognize the contributions made by Town Administrator Mark Stankiewicz and the department heads for their diligence and professionalism in the development of the budget. Special thanks to Town Treasurer Pat Anderson, who while recovering from a severe injury, continued her work on the budget. The contributions of Administrative Assistant Michele Voislow and Town Council Liaison Julie Carroccia, completed the budget team. Our thanks to them all.

The recommended Operating budget for FY 2018 is \$27,724,601, which is an increase of 0.44% or \$121,833 greater than last year's budget. The proposed budget and the Revaluation of the Grand List, effective December 31, 2016 results in an estimated tax rate of \$9.54 per thousand of real estate valuation, a reduction of 6.56% or sixty seven cents from the former rate of \$10.21. To fund this less than one half of one percent increase, a tax levy increase of \$265,957 or 1.13% is required, based upon current estimates of the Grand List.

The Budget Commission's recommendation of Expenditures for FY 2017-2018 and its comparison with the prior Fiscal year is presented below:

EXPENDITURES				
	2017	2018	\$ Change	% Change
Chariho School Budget	14,111,439	14,121,237	9,798	0.07%
Department Expenditures	9,876,938	10,231,803	354,865	3.59%
Transfers Out	1,195,650	1,125,050	(70,600)	-5.90%
Debt Service	675,088	787,589	112,501	16.66%
Capital Expenditures	1,743,653	1,458,922	(284,731)	-16.33%
Total Recommended Budget	27,602,768	27,724,601	121,833	0.44%

Continued ...

The Budget Commission's recommendation of Revenues for FY 2017-2018 and its comparison with the prior Fiscal year is presented below:

REVENUES				
	2017	2018	\$ Change	% Change
General Fund Tax Revenue - Current Year	23,547,137	23,813,094	265,957	1.13%
General Fund Tax Revenue - Prior Years	400,000	400,000	-	0.00%
Interest	195,000	180,000	(15,000)	-7.69%
In Lieu of Tax	6,666	7,699	1,033	15.50%
Motor Vehicle Excise Tax	42,696	44,097	1,401	3.28%
State Aid to Education	1,706,432	1,653,819	(52,613)	-3.08%
Other Governmental Revenue	289,370	392,061	102,691	35.49%
Local Revenues	1,090,467	1,183,831	93,364	8.56%
Fund Balance Transfers	275,000	-	(275,000)	-100.00%
Impact Fee Transfers	50,000	50,000	-	0.00%
General Fund Revenues	27,602,768	27,724,601	121,833	0.44%

The recommended Budget Real Estate tax rate is approximately \$9.54 per thousand of real estate valuation. The rate is based upon the estimated Statement of Assessed Valuations by the Town's Assessor, who has recently informed residents of the results of the required Revaluation to be effective December 31, 2016. The estimated net assessment value of the Town's grand list is \$2,517,368,820, and remains subject to the Assessor's finalization and certification.

Charlestown's tax rate during the current year is among the lowest in the State of Rhode Island and is expected to continue to maintain its favorable tax status with this budget.

Listed below are the Budget Commission's comments regarding major changes and recommendations for Fiscal Year 2017-2018.

Large Projects:

The major increase in expenditures for Capital Projects in last year's effort has been scaled back, but continues to reflect significant increases in improvements initiated for the Town's physical facilities and roadways. Efforts include improvements to our North/South roadways, replacement of storm culverts, and expansion of road resurfacing.

Public Works:

- Burdickville Road renovation:
Previously appropriated \$1,040,400, this recommendation adds funds for resolution of resident recommendations and contingency \$160,000
- Road Resurfacing throughout Town \$250,000
- Old Mill Road:
Preliminary Engineering for improvements \$126,500
- Kings Factory Road Box Culvert \$120,000

Recreation:

- Tennis Court Reconstruction @ Wicklund Field and
Renovation of Softball Field @ Wicklund Field \$212,000

Continued on next page...

Fleet Replacements:

This budget provides funding for fleet and vehicle replacements:
Police and Town service department vehicles and replacement of
Public Works' heavily used vehicles.

	\$510,978
• Police (3):	\$111,678
• Town Admin. (2)	\$ 64,000
• Public Works / Sweeper Vac All	\$268,000
• Truck with Plow:	\$ 67,300

Noteworthy Budgetary Issues include:

- Increased support to Memorial Day Committee parade from \$2,500 to \$5,000
- Recommended Administrative Study
Finance/Collector/Assessor/IT/GIS, policies and practices \$35,000.
- The Town's low bonded indebtedness of \$5,610,000 and excellent bond rating of Aa2 are supported by this recommendation.
- The three-year program to improve Recreation programming/budgeting is now complete thanks to the efforts of Town Administrator Mark Stankiewicz, Treasurer Pat Anderson, Parks & Recreation Director Vicky Hilton and Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Ray DeFalco.
- The Town's Unassigned Fund Balance in the amount of \$5,671,176 and 20.46% of the FY '18 budget, is in the independent auditor's recommended range of 15-25% of budget. Unassigned Fund Balance provides capability to provide for emergencies and also provides liquidity for financial operation.

The Budget Commission recommends continued support for:

• Town Capital Maintenance Fund	\$ 50,000
• Town Pond and Beach Fund	\$250,000
• Health Care Post-employment Benefits	\$450,000
• Employee Severance Benefit Fund	\$150,000

Budget Recommendations for Enterprise Funds:

- \$199,814. – The Charlestown Residential Collection Center recommended budget includes use of retained earnings in the amount of \$4,439 and a General Fund subsidy of \$25,000 to fund this activity.
- \$62,900. – Recommended Coastal Pond Commission budget to fund operations, including the Harbormaster, mooring fields and navigation aids. The Coastal Pond Commission is funded by mooring fees.

Charlestown Budget Commission



**Charlestown Market Totes
and Beach Bags are Back in Stock and
Available at Town Hall and Local Merchants!**





2017 Spring/Summer Parks & Recreation Programs

The Charlestown Parks and Recreation Department is offering the following programs. You may register at the Charlestown Parks and Recreation Department office located in the Town Hall, or online at www.charlestownrec.com/info.

Parks & Recreation Phone Number: 364-1222

Summer Day Camp - Camp is for children ages 5 - 12 and is broken up into four age groups. Extended Camp hours are \$10/hr per day or \$100 for the whole summer. Field Trip prices not included in fee and trips are not mandatory.



Summer Counselor-In-Training

Is your child too young for a job, but too old for traditional summer camps? We've got you covered. Our CIT / Leadership program is designed for children ages 13 - 17 and looking to build a resume for future summer employment. The program will provide leadership experience working with our camp children and participating in certification classes, speakers and getting constant feedback from our experienced CIT / Leadership staff. Participants will get CPR/ First Aid certified, have group discussions about working with children and the community, and go on leadership trips.

Tennis Lessons - Serving up tennis instruction you're sure to love! Your child will have a ball learning from our ace staff: Don Fair, Anna Overend, CJ Widdlefield and Gabrielle Torres. Get the racket out of your house and onto the court.

Spring Outdoor Tennis - Ninigret Park Tennis Courts - April May 6-June 24

Saturday Mornings - 8am-9am—Ages: 6-8/9am-10am—Ages: 9-11/10am-11am—Ages: 12-17 Cost: \$95 - Instructor: Don Fair - You must pre-register for this program

Summer Session – Instructor: Don Fair **Location:** Ninigret Park Tennis Courts

Date: July 5th to August 18 **Time:** Mon, Wed, Fri **Fee:** \$120/student / 6 - 8 Year Olds - 8:00 am - 9:00 am / 9 - 11 Year Olds 9:00 am - 10:00 am / 12-17 Year Olds 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Summer Concerts

Join us on select Sundays at Ninigret Park, New Pavilion (near the playground) from 5 pm - 7 pm for our free summer concerts. We have a variety of local bands from RI and greater New England.

- **Phil Adams** - June 25th - Phil Adams is a talented, young musician based in Westerly, RI. Plays inspired originals and eclectic covers that range from classic rock, jam band and everything in-between
- **Adam Ezra** - July 2nd - The Adam Ezra Group won Band of the Year at 2013 New England Music Awards. The group's live performances are sweaty, passionate affairs that have been compared to those of Bruce Springsteen and the East Street Band.
- **James DeSalvo** - July 23rd - 2016 Wakefield Idol winner James DeSalvo will entertain with a mix of great originals and covers from reggae to rock favorites. He brings tons of energy to every show with his powerful vocals and unique sound.
- **Take it to the Bridge** - August 13th - A high-energy funk/rock cover band from Southern Rhode Island, "Take it to the Bridge" is an eight-piece group that has all the right stuff to keep the night alive. From the classics (The Commodores, Jackson 5, Stevie Wonder) to current hits (Pharrell, Bruno Mars, Gnarls Barkley).
- **Silverteeth** - August 20th - Guitar driven music with a dose of pop and a heavy amount of grit evocative of alternative rock's golden era in the '90s. This local group is a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon.



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Summer Movies

Join us at Ninigret Park at dusk this summer for free movie night at the field across from the playground!

June 28th - **Sing** - PG – 1 hr. 48 minutes

July 12th - **The Angry Birds Movie** - PG – 1 hr. 37 minutes

July 26th - **Batman LEGO® Movie** - PG - 1 hr. 44 minutes

August 9th - **Beauty and the Beast** - (live-action film) PG - 2 hrs. 9 minutes



Swimming Lessons

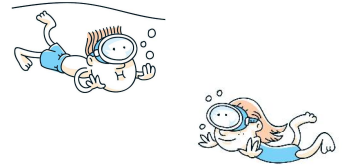
Dive into summer with youth swimming lessons. Learn with our Lifeguard certified swimming instructors at Little Nini pond.

Location: Little Nini Pond, Ninigret Park

Date: Mon, Wed - 7/10 - 8/16 **Time:** 9:00 a.m. – 10:45 am

Fee: \$60 per session - 3 - 5 Year Olds 9:00 am - 9:45 am Ages 6 + 10:00 am - 10:45 am

The first class of each new session will meet at 9:00 am to determine levels for weeks to follow.



Summer Golf Camp

(1st-9th grade) The program includes 12 hours of instruction, full use of driving range, and putting green, greens fees at Winnapaug Golf Course, water, and snacks each day! Instructors will be Lou Toscano, Kindergarten teacher at Pine Point School and Certified Teaching Professional with over 30 years of teaching experience. (Includes Four 1 hour lessons, balls, greens fees, water, snack)

Location: Winnapaug Country Club

Date: Mon, Wed, Fri 7/3–7/14

Time: 9:00 a.m.–12:00 pm

Fee: \$125.00/student - Return completed form and payment to Lou Toscano, 51 John Street Westerly, RI, by June 30th



Music Classes

Have you ever thought about learning to play guitar? Is there an instrument collecting dust in a closet somewhere in your house? We are offering unparalleled music classes for your busy schedule. Brendon Murano is offering a series of drop in classes that include jam night, guitar class, bass class, audio recording class and senior music appreciation. These classes are for all ages (except senior music appreciation) and skill levels for only \$5 per hour class. **Must register by the Friday before the Sunday class by 4pm.** Drop-In Classes run on Sundays at the Sr. Community Center at Ninigret Park, Please register one day prior for drop-in classes (click the link in the class name below) Drop-in Guitar, Drop-in Bass, Drop-in Audio Production, Drop-in Jam Night, Drop-in Senior Music Appreciation.



Charlestown Selected for the Solarize Rhode Island Program

The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources and Commerce RI have selected Charlestown to participate in a program to make solar energy more affordable to residents and small businesses, and to simplify the process of finding a contractor and installing solar panels for personal electric generation.

Solarize Charlestown will bring residents together as a group to negotiate the lowest cost and easiest deal possible on solar panels for their roof or yard. The sign-up period begins on June 7 and ends on September 8. This limited time period allows a bulk purchase of solar panels, so that the more people who sign up the less expensive it will be for each household.

Julie Carroccia (Town Council Vice President) and Ruth Platner (Planning Commission Chair) wrote the application to allow Charlestown to qualify for the program. Charlestown resident Jeff Rayner will serve as the “Solar Ambassador”. In the coming weeks Julie, Ruth, and Jeff will be reaching out to homeowners and businesses to explain the program.

If you’ve been thinking about adding solar panels to your home, Solarize Charlestown may make this the best year to make the decision to start producing your own electricity.

News from the Tax Collector's Office

4th Quarter Taxes Due

The 4th quarter installment of the 2016 Tax Roll is now due and will be delinquent after June 1st, 2017. Make sure to call for interest figures if your account is delinquent.

We do accept credit card payments, by phone or online. You can access Official Payments Corp. by linking through the Town Website www.charlestownri.org or directly @ www.officialpayments.com or by phone, 888-272-9829. You will need to know your account number and the jurisdiction code (4902). You can also pay online through www.RleGovernment.com which requires both your PIN# and account #. You will find your personal PIN# on your tax bill or delinquent notice. Both credit card companies charge a convenience fee of approximately 3%. If you need any assistance with paying by credit card, please contact our office at 401-364-1234.

Just a reminder, there is a drop box at the building entrance; in case you are unable to pay during normal business hours. If a receipt is requested, please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

We have some exciting things happening in the Tax Collector's Department! You will be able to sign up for Automatic Withdrawals to make your quarterly payments! You can fill out a form and have your payments deducted from your account on a quarterly/monthly/bi-weekly/weekly basis. We will also be utilizing a Lockbox for this coming Tax season so please keep an eye out for any information regarding the new Tax Bills. There will be an envelope provided for the 1st Quarter installment with the payment address printed on the Tax Bill for future payments. As always, payments will be accepted at the Tax Collector's office.

Be on the lookout for your 2017 Tax Bill. The 2017 Tax Bills will be printed and mailed by the middle of July. The 1st Quarter is due August 1st and late after September 1st. If your bill is under \$100.00, the entire bill is due in the 1st Quarter.

Thank you and let's all look forward to a great summer!

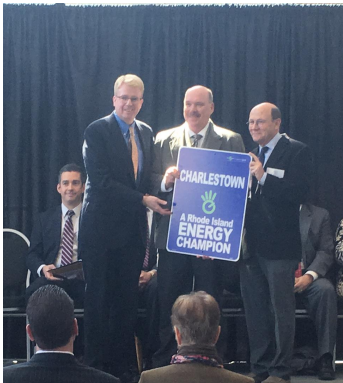


Senior Lunches: Good Food and Good Company!



Don't know what to do for lunch? Try a delicious lunch at the Charlestown Senior/Community Center. Here's the scoop: Monday through Friday at 12:00 noon a full hot lunch is served, or a cold lunch as an alternative, and of course dessert. All of this for only a \$3.00 suggested donation. It is requested that you reserve your spot at least 2 days in advance by stopping in or by calling the kitchen at 364-6998. Menu options are available by calling or by visiting our website at www.charlestownri.org. Don't pass up this opportunity to have a wonderful meal and meet some really interesting people as well.

Charlestown Receives \$5,000 Grant for Energy Efficiency!



As one of six municipalities statewide, Charlestown was named a Rhode Island Energy Champion by National Grid and SmartPower, a nonprofit marketing firm specializing in energy efficiency and clean energy. Other towns receiving awards included Barrington, Bristol, Little Compton, Narragansett and Tiverton.

Each town promoted energy efficiency for three months, resulting in more than five percent of each community's households joining the Rhode Island Energy Challenge, requiring them to find four ways to reduce their energy consumption in their homes.

The award also included a \$5,000 grant to each town for use in an energy efficiency project. Charlestown Town Administrator, Mark Stankiewicz, said the monies would be used to defray the cost of new and upgraded lighting at the town's senior community center.

Septic Systems in Charlestown's Salt Pond Region

Among Rhode Island's coastal communities, only Charlestown and Little Compton depend entirely on local groundwater for drinking and septic systems for sewage disposal. This makes these two towns particularly vulnerable to pollution of drinking water with their sewage.

In 2016, the Potable Water Working Group (PWWG) raised the discussion of possible protective measures for our groundwater. The 2017 Draft Harbor Management Plan included some points from the PWWG discussions. This has generated some misunderstanding over the distinction between possible options and planned actions. The following is intended to inform and clarify.

Most coastal properties depend on groundwater (shallow wells) for drinking because the potential for salt-water intrusion often excludes deeper wells. The close proximity of septic systems and shallow drinking wells raises the risk for pollution of drinking water with wastewater, especially in densely developed areas.

Nitrogen in the form of Nitrate-Nitrogen, mainly from domestic wastewater and the use of chemical fertilizers is one of the main contaminants in groundwater and our coastal salt ponds. Nitrate in drinking water interferes with the oxygen-carrying capacity of blood, to which pregnant women and children are particularly vulnerable. Nitrate in our salt ponds promotes increased vegetative and algae growth, which depletes ponds of oxygen and can lead to other water quality and odor issues.

Studies conducted by URI Cooperative Extension indicate that up to 80% of the Nitrates in groundwater around Charlestown's salt ponds come from septic systems. Accordingly, the State of Rhode Island has implemented rules that focus on reducing pollution of groundwater from septic systems. In addition, Charlestown requires septic system inspections, promotes landscapers who use fertilizers sparingly, and reduces the invasive, resident Canada Geese population by managing eggs (sparing the salt ponds hundreds of pounds of Nitrogen each year).

Jurisdiction over permits for septic systems in Rhode Island rests **exclusively** with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM). The Town of Charlestown has **no authority over the design or permitting of septic systems**. The function of the Town's on-site wastewater management program is to ensure that existing septic system performance meets RIDEM guidelines. Only RIDEM dictates septic system design and installation parameters and only RIDEM issues septic system permits.

Because of the threat of Nitrogen in groundwater, RIDEM requires that any new septic system installed in the region of salt ponds be designed to remove at least 50% of the Nitrogen from the wastewater. RIDEM has approved over a dozen varieties of commercial Nitrogen-reducing septic systems. All of these must meet rigorous performance standards set by the American National Standards Institute. The average cost of a Nitrogen-reducing septic system is about \pm \$25,000, compared to approximately \pm \$10,000 for a conventional system.

At no time other than to replace a failed septic system or a cesspool does the Town require the installation of a new septic system. **The Town currently has no authority from RIDEM to mandate replacement of an existing functional septic system with a new Nitrogen reducing system and the Town Council has not requested the development of any new requirements for mandatory septic system upgrades.**

REMINDER - Complete Stop Right on Red!

Red Light Cameras on Rt. 1 North & South at East & West Beach Roads

We all know not to run a red light, but here are the facts for taking a Right Turn on Red: Except when a sign is placed prohibiting a right turn on red, vehicles may turn right on a steady red light after the driver has **stopped completely** and yielded the right-of-way to pedestrians and other vehicles.

§ 31-13-4 Obedience to devices. – The driver of any vehicle shall obey the instructions of any official traffic control device applicable to him or her placed in accordance with the provisions of chapters 12 – 27 of this title, unless otherwise directed by a traffic or police officer, subject to the exceptions granted the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle in those chapters. Violations of this section are subject to fines enumerated in § 31-41.1-4.

§ 31-20-9 Obedience to stop signs. – Every driver of a vehicle approaching a stop sign shall stop before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection. In the event there is no crosswalk, the driver shall stop at a **clearly marked stop line**, but if none, then at the point nearest the intersecting highway where the driver has a view of approaching traffic on the intersecting highway before entering the intersection, except when directed to proceed by a police officer or traffic control signal. Violations of this section are subject to fines enumerated in § 31-41.1-4.

THE TOWN HALL PIPELINE

Charlestown Town Hall
4540 South County Trail
Charlestown, RI 02813



Time Sensitive Material

Beach Sticker Fees 2017

Resident Beach Sticker	\$ 50
Resident Senior Citizens	\$ 25
Non-Resident Beach Sticker	\$100
Non-Resident Senior Citizen	\$ 50
Cottage Pass	\$400

As of May 1, 2017 seasonal Beach passes are available at the Town Clerk's Office. You may stop in or mail a letter of request to the Town Clerk along with your Charlestown property address, a copy of your vehicle registration, a check made payable to Town of Charlestown and a self addressed stamped envelope.

Daily Entrance Beach Fees

Charlestown Beach	
Weekdays	\$ 20
Weekends/Holidays	\$ 20
Blue Shutters	
Weekdays	\$ 20
Weekends/Holidays	\$ 20

Seasonal Hours of Operation

Mon.–Fri. (non-holidays) 9 AM to 5 PM
Sat., Sun. and Holidays 8 AM to 5 PM



Memorial Day—Labor Day
Lifeguards on Duty
WEATHER PERMITTING



Rhode Island's Bye Bye Mattress is a statewide mattress recycling program, created by a 2013 law and managed by the Mattress Recycling Council. As a participating collection site, we accept mattresses and box springs for free at Charlestown Residential Collection Center (CRCC) located at Sand Hill Road In Charlestown, during the following hours of operation: Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. See CRCC Note at bottom right of this page for CRCC holiday information.

Thanks to this program, the mattresses and box springs we collect are diverted from landfills and used to make other useful products like carpet padding, insulation, filters and mulch. It's also helping our community deter illegal dumping.

To learn more about Rhode Island's program, visit www.byebyemattress.com.

CRCC Reminder

ID Stickers expire annually at the end of the calendar year and must be renewed at Town Hall or by mail with a copy of your registration(s) and a twenty dollar check (made out to CRCC) for each sticker. Please call Alan at (401) 364-1230 weekdays with questions.



A very helpful online resource for questions about how to recycle various items is located at www.rirrc.org. Go to A-Z Recyclopedia.

Town Hall Contact Info

364-1210 Town Administrator
364-1215 Building/Zoning
364-1230 Dept. of Public Works
364-1222 Parks & Recreation
364-1225 Planning
364-1233 Tax Assessor's
364-1234 Tax Collector's
364-1200 Town Clerk's
364-1235 Treasurer
364-1212 Police (non-emergency)
364-1076 Public Assistance
364-5030 Wastewater Mgt.

4540 South County Trail, Charlestown RI 02813

Town Hall Hours: M-F 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Animal Shelter: Call ahead, 364-1211

M-F 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM, Saturday 8:00 AM to Noon

CRCC Hours: M, TH, FRI, SA, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

NOTE: If a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed the next day (Monday). If a holiday falls on a Monday, the CRCC does not open another day to compensate.